

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Re-examination and reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested. It is submitted that entry of these amendments will render the present claims allowable or, in the alternative, simplify the issues for appeal. The previously submitted claim amendments have not been entered. A newly set of amended claims is presented herein.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1-4, 7-10, 12 and 14-25, as amended, and new claims 26-33, will be pending. The amendments are fully supported throughout the specification, for example, by Figures 10 and 11.

New claims 26-28 and 29-33 are also fully supported by the specification, see, in particular, page 20, fourth full paragraph, and the drawing figures 9-11.

Accordingly, no new matter has been introduced.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Applicants respectfully submit that the above amendments fully address this rejection.

Claims 1, 3-4, 10, 12-13, 15-16, 18-19, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jelinek (US 4,026,565). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Jelinek neither teaches nor suggests a liner conforming with the convex and continuously curved inner peripheral edge and a portion of the frame in addition to the inner peripheral edge. In fact, to the extent that the sealing portion 20 of Jelinek is equated to Applicants' "inner peripheral edge being convex and continuously curved configuration" there is no provision of a "liner of chemically resistant material conforming with the convex and continuously curved inner portion." If, however, the second member 23 of rigid material is equated to the frame member, than the sealing portion 20 does not correspond to a "liner of chemically resistant material conforming with the convex and continuously curved inner peripheral edge." Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1, 8, 17, 19 and 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Plunkett (US 6,089,572). In addition, claims 2, 14 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Plunkett in view of Breaker (US 5,518,257). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

The Applicants submit that Plunkett neither teaches nor suggests a gasket having a “substantially unitary” frame. As clearly shown and described throughout the Plunkett patent the gasket is comprised of a complex frame member comprised of three separate and distinct metal plates **32, 34** and **36**, as shown clearly in Figs 2 and 3.

Furthermore, Plunkett does not teach or suggest a convex and continuously curved inner peripheral edge *over the full width* of the gasket. As may be readily seen from Fig. 1 and Fig. 3 of Plunkett, even assuming that edge 78 is an inner peripheral edge, it does not extend over the full width of the gasket. At most, it extends only coextensively with the aperture(s) 22. Such an edge is not “of continuously curved configuration over the full width of the gasket.” This deficiency is not remedied by the combination of Plunkett with Breaker, which the Examiner cites merely for the use of PTFE liner. Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of this rejection.

Newly presented claims 26-28, which specify that the frame of the gasket is a plasticized resin, e.g., ethylene-propylene-diene monomers (EPDM), are further distinguished over the prior art, including Plunkett, which limits the gasket to metal frame materials.

Newly presented claims 29-33, which provide that the liner is U-shaped and substantially filled with the frame material, are further distinguished over the prior art, including, Plunkett and Jelinek. Jelinek does not disclose or suggest a U-shaped liner. Plunkett does not disclose or suggest a U-shaped liner which is substantially completely filled with frame material (see, e.g., Figs. 2 and 4).

Therefore, all objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney for Applicants at the telephone number indicated below in order to expeditiously resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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